

The E-Rate annual application process for K-12 schools to apply for basic telephone and internet e-rate discount funding is excessively labor intensive and expensive for K-12 schools. Given that telephone and internet service is a basically static type of service, changing very little in quantity or source from year to year for K-12 schools, the application process should be automatically renewable unless there is a threshold level of change.

Or, better yet, ideally, the telecom and internet providers would just automatically pass a graduated level of educational discount directly on to their K-12 customers - completely eliminating the need for the labor-intensive annual application process. The key objective of the E-rate discount program is to enable schools to get discounted telephony and internet services. If this can be accomplished through direct discounting from the providers themselves without going through the SLC - everyone would benefit. There could be tax advantages and/or penalties to ensure that this process is followed.

The current annual application process leaves open the possibility that the schools may fail to receive the needed e-rate discount funding due to a filing shortfall - such as postmarking a day late of the deadline or failing to include minor new requirements that get added from year to year in the depths of the voluminous documentation for the process.

Educational discounts for basic repetitive telephone and internet services should be easy, automatic, and non-labor-intensive to acquire on an ongoing basis.